

Peer Review Information

Journal: Nature Human Behaviour

Manuscript Title: State-level needs for social distancing and contact tracing to contain COVID-19 in the United States

Corresponding author name(s): Weihsueh A. Chiu & Martial L. Ndeffo-Mbah

Editorial Notes:

Transferred manuscripts This manuscript has been previously reviewed at another journal that is not operating a transparent peer review scheme. This document only contains reviewer comments, rebuttal and decision letters for versions considered at Nature Human Behaviour.

Reviewer Comments & Decisions:

Decision Letter, initial version:

14th September 2020

*Please ensure you delete the link to your author homepage in this e-mail if you wish to forward it to your co-authors.

Dear Dr Ndeffo-Mbah,

Thank you once again for submitting your revised manuscript, entitled "State-level needs for social distancing and contact tracing to contain COVID-19 in the United States," and for your patience during the re-review process. I apologise once again for the time that this has taken.

Your manuscript has now been evaluated by our referees, and in the light of their advice I am delighted to say that we can in principle offer to publish it. Please note that while Reviewer 3 has not sent their comments, we consulted with Reviewer 2 who was positive about the revisions made in response to Reviewer 3's comments. We would like you to revise your paper to address the additional points made by Reviewer 2, which you will find below, and to ensure that it complies with our Guide to Authors at <http://www.nature.com/nathumbehav/info/gta>.

One of the main reasons for delays in formal acceptance is failure to fully comply with editorial policies and formatting requirements. To assist you with finalizing your manuscript for publication, I attach a checklist that lists all of our editorial policies and formatting requirements. I also attach a template document, which exemplifies our policies and formatting requirements.

Please attend to *every item* in the checklist and upload a copy of the completed checklist with your submission. I have highlighted in the checklist items that require your attention. I also mention here a few points that are frequently missed and can cause delays:

1) Ensure that all corresponding authors have linked their ORCID to their account on our online manuscript handling system. This is very frequently missed and invariably causes delays in formal acceptance.

2) Ensure that you provide all of the materials requested in the attached checklist and below with your final submission. Please note that the Licence to Publish needs to be hand-signed.

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Please state in the cover letter 'I wish to participate in transparent peer review' if you want to opt in, or 'I do not wish to participate in transparent peer review' if you don't. Failure to state your preference will result in delays in accepting your manuscript for publication.

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We hope to hear from you within 10 days; please let us know if the revision process is likely to take longer.

To submit your revised manuscript, you will need to provide the following:

- Cover letter
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- Manuscript text (not including the figures) in .docx or .tex format
- Individual figure files (one figure per file)
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Reviewer Recognition:

In recognition of the time and expertise our reviewers provide to Nature Human Behaviour's editorial process, we would like to formally acknowledge their contribution to the external peer review of your manuscript entitled "State-level needs for social distancing and contact tracing to contain COVID-19 in the United States". For those reviewers who give their assent, we will be publishing their names alongside the published article.

Please use the following link for uploading these materials:

[REDACTED]

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

With best regards,

Charlotte Payne
Editor
Nature Human Behaviour

Reviewer #2:

Remarks to the Author:

Thanks very nice for the careful response to our edits.

A few suggestions:

page 5 line 3 and 4: I can't see >1 and <1 besides the Reff? Maybe its just my Word software though?

page 16 last line: publically --> publicly ?

page 17, Reff(t) equation: I think they could explain this in words, and where the relative contributions come from? I think this would help for a more general reader that is not as familiar with these definitions (but this is just a personal preference).

Reviewer #3:

None

Author Rebuttal to Initial comments

Dear Reviewer,

We are grateful for all the constructive comments and suggestions and have now thoroughly revised our manuscript to address them. Below, you will find a point-by-point response to your comments. In addition we have provided a revised version of our manuscript with all major changes highlighted.

We hope to have satisfactorily addressed your comments and that you will now find the manuscript suitable for publication.

Thank you in advance,

Martial Ndeffo, PhD

Reviewer #2:

Remarks to the Author:

Thanks very nice for the careful response to our edits.

A few suggestions:

page 5 line 3 and 4: I can't see >1 and <1 besides the Ref? Maybe it's just my Word software though?

RESPONSE: We have corrected the typo

page 16 last line: publically --> publicly ?

RESPONSE: We have corrected the typo

page 17, Reff(t) equation: I think they could explain this in words, and where the relative contributions come from? I think this would help for a more general reader that is not as familiar with these definitions (but this is just a personal preference).

RESPONSE: We have now added an explanation in words and described where the relative contributions come from

Final Decision Letter:

Dear Dr Ndeffo-Mbah,

We are pleased to inform you that your Article "State-level needs for social distancing and contact tracing to contain COVID-19 in the United States", has now been accepted for publication in Nature Human Behaviour. Thank you so much for your patience during the review process.

Before your manuscript is typeset, we will edit the text to ensure it is intelligible to our wide readership and conforms to house style. We look particularly carefully at the titles of all papers to ensure that they are relatively brief and understandable.

The subeditor may send you the edited text for your approval. Once your manuscript is typeset you will receive a link to your electronic proof via email within 20 working days, with a request to make any corrections within 48 hours. If you have queries at any point during the production process then please contact the production team at rjsproduction@springernature.com. Once your paper has been scheduled for online publication, the Nature press office will be in touch to confirm the details.

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With best regards,

Charlotte Payne
Editor
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